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This story takes place in Ireland, my homeland. Some words and uses of words may be unfamiliar. I'll list them below and explain them as best as I can.

Darragh - is a name pronounced similar to the spelling of Dara.

Frigid- Being sexually unresponsive, pokerfaced to his/her attempts to kiss/hug/have any interaction with you makes you frigid.

The Ilac Shopping Centre - is a large mall in Dublin City Centre.

Kiss Me I'm Irish

By

D.K. Daniels

Darragh sat quietly and attentively. Every so often his absent expression conjured up into a radiant smile. I had ceased cracking jokes; his undivided attention needed to be with the face painter. There was still that giddy, flutter like energy roaming in the air. It wasn't quite because it was St. Patrick's Day but perhaps it's because at 14 he's getting his face painted. Nothing too fancy just a couple of shamrocks nestled across his plump red cheeks accompanied by an odd flag. When he had asked could he get his face painted, I didn't take him seriously. Though when I had said, "you're not serious?" He just gave me a deadpan expression, and I guess that was all I needed to answer my messy thoughts.

Darragh has always been that sort of boy. He may be soft in his approach; however, once you get to know him, he's crazy. Not bad crazy, it's a good type of mad. If his personality is not enough to make you smile, then I don't know what is. He's funny, caring, thoughtful, and cute. I never thought that I'd actually fall for a boy with red hair, blue eyes and a small offering of freckles dashed across his nose. It just adds to his overall beauty; it's weird when I phrase it like that but yeah... I love it when his hair is naturally curly; it's not obsessive or bizarre, it's light. The turn of events that has happened today has just added to my admiration for him. I think I'm falling in love. Nobody knows that I'm gay, well except for Darragh. I came out to him about two or three months ago, although the reality at the moment is that I'm gay for him. I've never felt this way for any other boy, but there is something about Darragh that makes me weak in the knees. My heart begins to palpitate in my chest every time I see him walking the corridor in school. My hands become clammy anytime he unloads his house keys, phone, wallet whenever he's climbing a high wall or

fence. Though that's not enough; even the thought of him climbing up such a colossal structure is enough to make me worry. I'm not sure if that feeling is mutual: I mean the anxious feeling I get in the pit of my stomach just watching him scale the side of a building is immense. I know it's common decency to panic when you love someone, and I don't mean love as in appreciating someone. What I really mean: is shit... I have no idea what I mean. All I know is that I'm afraid that he'll fall. Every time he's done it though I'm grateful to hear the chirpy raspy voice when he reaches solid ground.

Prior to Darragh's face painting session, we had only got something to eat before the parade. Now that the parade is actually over I wonder what the evening has in store for us. Maybe I can ask him to throw an all-nighter at my house, munching on junk food, playing some Xbox and listening to some tunes. Having an evening alone with him is something that I'd appreciate very much, not in a weird way. Then in some odd, precarious, most undoubtedly ridiculous notion I'll tell him that I love him. But then again when I think of it logically like that: that will never come true. This is real life; not a Disney movie. It's been so long since I set my eyes on him that I forget the actual day we first met. Although if I was to take an educated guess, I think it was the first Monday we started school in first class. Vaguely from what I remember Darragh had been standing at the top of the classroom, bashful and nervous. Since I knew a couple of the kids from my previous school years, I had never encountered Darragh before. And since I was in need of new friends, I decided to march up the aisle and introduce myself. The first thing that I remember about him was when he smiled. His lips parted, his teeth showed; well what was left accordingly at the time. I recall that he had no front teeth in his mouth. His approach to my introduction was coy and innocence. It seemed playful, full of life and animated. Still to this day nothing has changed. Well, his teeth did grow back of course, and the addition to braces. I find that ultimately attractive about him. What's not to like, he's cute; he has red hair: blue eyes and his face is not smothered in freckles, they're just a light dusting. And anytime he rolls up his sleeves.... god.... He is the perfect example of male beauty. Just about anything seems to make him cute these days and his little deed now where he's getting his face painted is somehow adorable.

As I stand, blending in with the crowd, I can't help but notice that some girls over by the large iron statue are looking at him. I guess he does have that aura about him. It's like one of those moments where you walk down the street, and you see a handsome boy or pretty girl, and you just know that they are beautiful. Well yeah, that explains everything about Darragh, he's attractive to everybody around him. That worries me I guess, I mean I'll never get a shot at actually telling him how I feel. Before I know it, he'll be taken away by a girl, and all of these stupid congested feelings will have been for nothing. The petite pictogram of the Irish flag and the loose assortment of green shamrocks make him wonderfully hypnotic.

It makes me so nervous every time he wonders his dreamy eyes from the woman whose painting his face to me. It's almost as if he's searching for some moral understanding, that this is funny or at least to him it is. Then he averts his eyes back to the woman and then that tingly feeling in the bottom my stomach just disappears. I feel like an idiot for standing here waiting for him to finish, can't the woman go any faster. But then again if it makes him look cute then take all the time is needed. I guess art takes time to master, and if it's rushed, it

will probably look crap. All at once my breathing is shallow, I feel a little ditzy and anxious at the same time. The young woman lowered her paintbrush after adding the final stroke upon his left cheek before plopping into a dirty cup of water. Darragh rose from the seat, glanced at me and gave a grin. The young woman who had been painting him just glanced up at him smiled at Darragh before averting her attention to the next child who wanted their face painted.

"What do you think?" Darragh asked.

Giving him a thorough look over I signal a thumbs up and say, "looks great." If he wasn't bashful at the moment, I sure as hell am now. Since we still had a bit of time to kill, I thought that going into the shopping centre would be a good idea, considering it is a little cold outside and since we have nothing better to do. The two of us began walking down the length of O'Connell Street until I finally asked, "hey do you want to go to the Ilac..." Darragh seemed to have drifted off into a different alternative universe as we strolled along. He contemplated for a moment before saying, "do you have shopping to get." I just shrugged my shoulders and said, "no it's just... it's cold, and I guess... We can hang out there for a bit."

With a nod from Darragh, the two of us just navigated down one of the side streets in Dublin, which the name of it escapes me. Eventually, we came out beside the Ilac. Before too long we stepped foot in the automatic door. The heater above warmed our cold ears and exposed heads. We dawdled around for a little bit, unsure of what to actually do. Although, I guess it's better than being outside in the cold. Eventually, Darragh stopped at a two-euro shop, we both went inside. Upon exiting Darragh bought four cans of string spray. You know that stuff when you actually spray it, and it comes out like a string. He got green white and two oranges. The moment we reached the door the war had begun. The two of us worked against each other to get the better of the other. He had the green canister; I had a white and orange. His second canister never seemed to work, so he just dropped it in the street, and the two of us still fought as hard as we could. Though still, I had the advantage over him. By the time we had finished we had ended back up on O'Connell Street, his hair is littered with white and orange ropes of string. I don't know what it was about it but it was cute, and something about it made me feel proud that I had done it. After a while, we took a turn off, a shortcut down a side street with not much foot traffic.

Unsure of why we took this optimum route, I just followed along all the same. After a moment Darragh stopped in the middle of the alley, hunched over and started ruffling his fingers through his hair. His exuberant laugh was still in place, and everything about him at this moment was exactly perfect. As I watch himself brush off the stragglers of multi-coloured string, I have a sudden urge to want to kiss him. I wanted to help somehow though I know that that does not happen. When he turned back around, he asked, "is all of it gone?"

Glancing high and low I reached up and brushed a couple of free components away that was still nestled in his hair, and then I lightly brushed over his shoulders. Though something had changed, he was just staring at me as I did it. When I noticed that he was staring intently at me, that same familiar feeling of anxiety worked its way up from the pit of my stomach to my chest. I felt a little bit uncomfortable, so I decided to stop; everything is quiet. I could

feel the warmth radiating from his mouth, gracing my face. The way his freckles danced lazily across his nose, his vibrant blue eyes peering at me, and his fiery amber hair so perfected. I felt my heart swoop to his level. He really is beautiful, and I guess if I don't snap out of it he'll think that something is wrong with me.

The two of us didn't move. I still stood fixed in place. Darragh glanced from left to right; he had become a little nervous. Darragh slowly extended his arm out, pinched small flays of artificial string from my head and dropped it. A tingle rose up from my tummy and forced its way all the way up to my throat. It feels like bubbles or something; my heart is beginning to hammer my chest, my breathing shallow, then Darragh spoke, "Jack are you are frigid?"

The question took me off course completely. I wasn't expecting him to ask me something like that. And of all things why is he asking me that. Unsure of how to appear as if I'm not one, when I most certainly am one, since I had never kissed anyone before I stuttered on my words, "no... I'm not..." I guess that my persuasion attempt was useless. Darragh crinkled one side of his mouth and drew it up into a grin. I wasn't sure where this was going, but my heart stopped when he said, "well what are you waiting for... Kiss me then."

Unsure if I understood him correctly, I waited for a moment until he widened his eyes and gave me a nod. Perhaps he is genuine and with that I cautiously, petrified leaned in closer, so close that I could feel his breath caressing my lips. Then our lips met, the seismic set of shock waves coursed through my body, it was electric. I became all jittery and nervous and happy all at the same time. Darragh held his same stupid smirk as broke the kiss and stepped away from me. He walked away from me a little, stumbling forward before pivoting his head over his shoulder and asked, "well you coming."

I smiled bashfully and ambled forward after him; awh... my first kiss.

The End